

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Gateway Packaging Corporation

Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

Gateway Packaging Benefits from Training Program Developed by IMEC

Client Profile:

Gateway Packaging is a manufacturer of performance packaging, including lidding, labels, rollstock and bags, primarily for the pet food industry. The company employs 120 people at its facility in Granite City, Illinois.

Situation:

Gateway Packaging had experienced significant turnover among its management team and decided it was time to introduce training to ensure new and experienced leaders shared common goals and strategies for maintaining the company's 25-year history of quality and service. Gateway's Project Manager Stephanie Winslow had recently participated in a program sponsored by Missouri Enterprise, a NIST MEP network affiliate, and began seeking out manufacturing-specific training programs that might work for her company's facilities in Illinois and Kansas City, Missouri. In the process, she discovered the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, and contacted IMEC for help.

Solution:

IMEC discussed goals and identified focus areas and developed a training program that included sessions which focused on problem solving, Training Within Industry (TWI), and total productive maintenance. IMEC consultants led Gateway Packaging in several training sessions and then spent one-on-one time with several shop floor supervisors to build job instruction documents for various pieces of equipment. IMEC also conducted a Lean manufacturing overview for several company employees. The problem-solving classes helped Gateway fix some recurring issues, and the total productive maintenance sessions allowed the company to increase uptime on a key piece of equipment, which is now operating on a 24/7 basis. "In the past, when a customer approached us with more business, our gut reaction was, 'We're too busy.' Now that we understand our capacity and are more focused on uptime, we've been able to take on additional work," Winslow said. "IMEC helped us think about our business in a different way." As a result of IMEC's assistance, equipment uptime has increased, job instruction documents for key equipment are completed, production capacity is enhanced, and machine operation has improved.

Results:

* Projected \$1.7 million in sales, cost savings and productivity improvements.

Testimonial:

"As a small manufacturer, we needed an advocate, and we found that in IMEC. They talked to us about what we were trying to accomplish, then pulled together a program that met our needs. They also helped us acquire funding to help make the training more affordable."

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Stephanie Winslow, Project Manager